

# Research and Evaluation

## Meeting Notes

### March 25, 2004

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**Attendance** Ron Harichandran, Jon Reincke, Calvin Roberts, Gary Taylor, Mumtaz Usmen, and Candice Andre

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**Meeting Overview**  
*(25 words or less)* Mumtaz Usmen led the team in creating the first DRAFT of the Michigan Transportation Research Council's Charter. The team focused mainly on the membership and values of the Charter, while brainstorming on other components. The drafts will be revisited at each future meeting to reach the goal of a final charter.

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- Meeting Notes**
1. Gary Taylor found there is an initiative between the automotive and transportation industry - VII committee (Vehicle Infrastructure Initiative) run by Roger and Curt.
  2. The partnerships built from this Action Team should include all modes of transportation. At this time there is no true coordination between the modes in the research area.
  3. There is a Michigan Research Transportation Consortium, which has been in the works for a few years at MDOT. This would act as an independent body that would increase the relationship between MDOT and universities. This has the same initials as the Action Team's MTRC (Council). The goals of the two are similar, with the Council being a broader entity. A long-term goal of the Consortium would be for Michigan to have an individual research institute that provides its own funding.
  4. The videoconferencing at MDOT – downtown Lansing has been reserved for the next 2 meetings from 8 am to 1 pm. Ebony Alexander (MDOT) is the contact.
  5. Research for the sake of research is not sufficient. Evaluation will ensure that the research conducted is able to be implemented. Evaluation is the follow-up after the research is implemented to check for sufficiency.
  6. Drafting the MTRC's charter:
    - Structure of members should include a core group or executive committee, which represents MDOT (senior management), universities, local government, LTAP, and FHWA. This core group should be appointed or in some way given responsibility for being involved in the meetings and doing the work.
    - The evaluation component is a goal and a mechanism. The goal is to make sure the evaluation component is emphasized in the council.
    - Discussion of research management system models of other states:

There are 2 people (Dave Huff, Eric Harm) from FHWA who are familiar with other states' research charter. Gary Taylor has looked at Minnesota, Oregon, Washington, and Virginia, and none of these states include a body such as the council to be an example.

- A recommendation is that the council give a list of good practices or what is desired out of a research program in Michigan, without giving a set structure. Appendix A of the Peer Exchange document has list of best practices found in other states.
  - The infrastructure of the council is the main resource needed to make the MTRC successful – members need to truly have an interest in the council and results.
  - All modes of transportation should be represented in the council with MDOT as a major component.
  - A list of who should participate in the council and how was discussed and can be found in the DRAFT charter.
  - The council has a potential to lose its direction if legislation becomes part of selecting members. The charter will suggest a structure and MDOT will decide how to proceed.
  - The agenda for first council meeting would be to develop the operating charter of the council.
  - Charter should include key attributes and components that MDOT has to embrace to make it successful. This will be a major step in making the council work and providing continuity.
7. MDOT's business plan does not mention "research" as an item. This must be one of the recommendations coming out of these Action Team meetings.
  8. Post-meeting critique: All attendees felt very good about the amount of work produced during the meeting.

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## Action Items

1. Mumtaz Usmen will work on finalizing an unavailable dates calendar with Sara Smith by the next meeting.
2. Gary Taylor will look at Summit participants to make sure all important groups have been included in the Action Team's stakeholder list. Gary Taylor will send the participant list of the Summit to all Action Team members.
3. Gary Taylor will bring the national document on research needs, which includes 5 main categories, to the next meeting.
4. These notes will give a reminder to Don Cameron to try to get peer reviews from other states (action item from 03/08/04 meeting).
5. Candice Andre will confirm with Ebony Alexander the videoconferencing room and projector for the next meeting.
6. Calvin Roberts will bring copies of MDOT's business plan to the next meeting and Gary Taylor will try to send the plan to members over email.
7. Mumtaz Usmen will send out 2 future meetings dates to track how many members can attend.

8. Candice Andre will send information record of past meetings to Sara Smith.
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**Proposed  
Agenda Topics  
For Next  
Meeting**

1. Summary of previous team activities
  2. Reports on action items
  3. Review and discussion of relevant issues
  4. Refine MTRC's mission and goals
  5. Refine MTRC's structure and composition
  6. Refine MTRC's operation and practices
  7. Plans and agenda for the next meeting
  8. Future meetings
  9. Post meeting critique (Self-assessment of progress and accomplishments to date and strategies for addressing future meetings.)
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**Next Meeting  
Dates**

1. April 16, 2004 at MDOT in downtown Lansing (8:30 am – 12:20 pm)